

## Southern Maryland News

U.S. Rep. Steny H. Hoyer (D-Md, 5th) and Capitol Hill staffers visited Greater Baden Medical Service's Brandywine community health center in August, kicking off the organization's 40th anniversary.

A celebration is scheduled for Oct. 23 at Newton White Mansion in Prince George's County.

During the nearly two-hour visit, the congressman read a book to a group of youngsters and spoke with their parents during the medical clinic's first Reach Out and Read story time in the pediatric waiting area.

Hoyer highlighted the Reach Out and Read program, which encourages children to read by having doctors "prescribe" a book at each visit. The program begins at the patient's six-month checkup and continues through age 5, with an emphasis on targeting the most impoverished children in the United States.

Families served by the Reach Out and Read program are encouraged to read together often.

"We are proud to have become a Reach Out and Read site here at Brandywine and project our pediatricians will prescribe more than 615 books this year. Our goal is to raise enough money to expand the program to our other health centers," Dr. Sarah Leonhard, the clinic's CEO, said in a news release.

Hoyer discussed the role that community health centers will play in the changing health care landscape with GBMS staff and leaders.